



Department  
for Education

# **Adoption Leadership Board headline measures and business intelligence**

**Quarter 1 2016 to 2017 update**

**January 2017**

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# Summary

## Adoption Leadership Board (ALB) Headline Measures

### **2,000 children waiting at 30 June 2016**

This is a 10% decrease from 31 March 2016 when there were 2,210 children waiting with a placement order not yet placed with an adoptive family.

28% of children waiting at 30 June 2016 had been waiting 18 months or more, a small decrease from 29% as at 31 March 2016.

### **Child timeliness has improved**

The time taken between a child entering care and being placed with a family for children who have been adopted (Adoption Scorecard indicator A1) has decreased by 4 months since 2012-13, from 22 months to 18 months in 2015-16, this is unchanged since 2014-15. The latest quarterly data suggests there has been an improvement to 17 months during the first quarter of 2016-17.

At 8 months, the average number of days between placement order and match for children who have been adopted (Adoption Scorecard indicator A2) in 2015-16 has remained the same as in 2014-15. The latest quarterly data suggests that this has stayed the same at 8 months during the first quarter of 2016-17.

### **Adopter timeliness is declining**

The latest quarterly data suggests adopter timeliness has been declining. In quarter 2 2013-14, 50% of approvals made by local authorities were made within 6 months of registration, while in quarter 1 2016-17 this had decreased to 31% of approvals. However this was an improvement on the 25% low in quarter 4 2014-15.

The timeliness of matches has declined. In quarter 4 2013-14, 80% of matches were made within 6 months of approval, compared to 45% in quarter 1 2016-17.

## Other Key Headlines

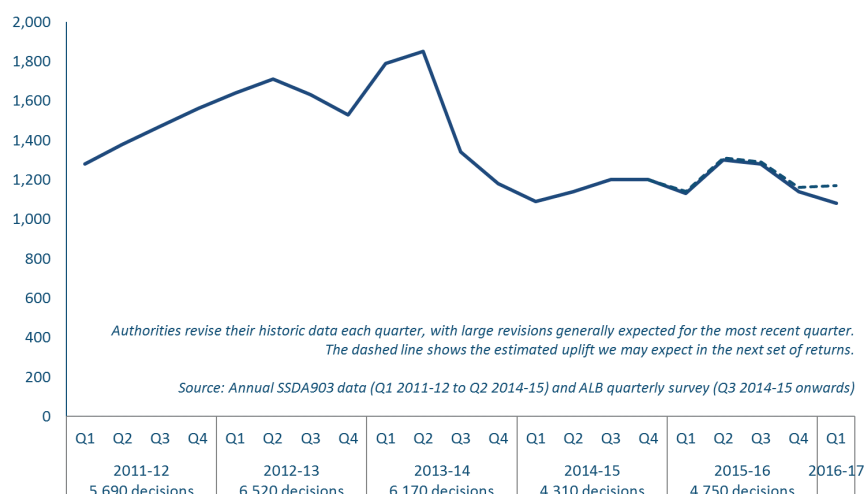
### New ADM decisions and placement orders granted have fallen

Quarterly data suggests that the number of new decisions has continued to fall from 1,850 in quarter 2 2013-14 to 1,080 in quarter 1 2016-17, a decrease of 42%.

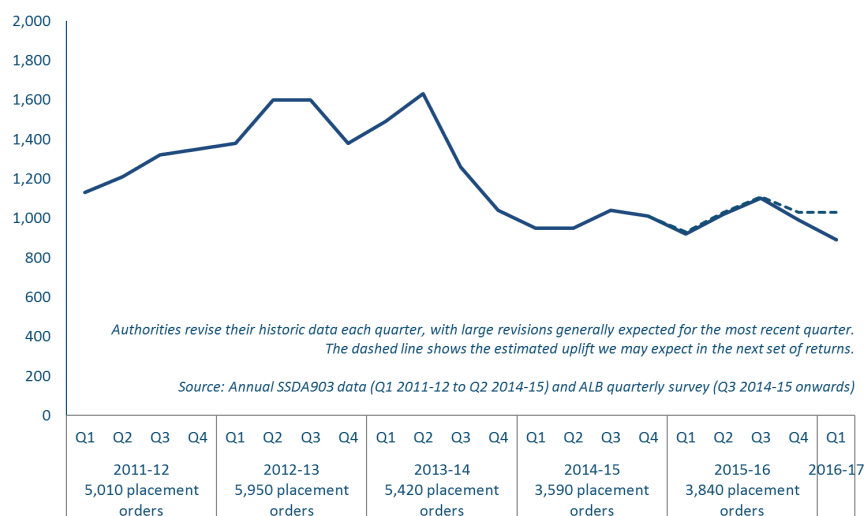
The number of new placement orders have also continued to fall from 1,630 in quarter 2 2013-14 to 890 in quarter 1 2016-17, a decrease of 45%.

The charts below show the number of ADM decisions and placement orders over time. The estimated figures on the charts are based on the uplift seen in previous quarters when local authorities revise their figures the following quarter. When we apply this uplift our estimates suggest that the number of new decisions and placement orders granted may have plateaued between quarter 4 2015-16 and quarter 1 2016-17.

Number of new ADM decisions in each quarter since 2011-12



Number of new placement orders granted in each quarter since 2011-12



**Children  
adopted from  
care has  
decreased**

In 2015-16, there were 4,690 adoptions, an increase of 35% from 2011-12, however, this was a decrease of 12% from 2014-15. Quarterly data suggests that there were 1,060 children adopted in quarter 1 2016-17.

**Adoptive family  
approvals have  
increased  
slightly and  
registrations  
have decreased**

Registrations to become an adopter have decreased by 13% from 840 in quarter 4 2015-16 to 730 in quarter 1 2016-17. The number of adopter families approved for adoption has increased slightly by 1% from 700 in quarter 4 2015-16 to 710 in quarter 1 2016-17.

Our most recent estimate for the “adopter gap” suggests that the gap has closed, and we now have more adoptive families than children waiting. However, there are still 1,730 children with a placement order not yet matched and the relevance of this measure assumes that matching is working effectively.

**Reversal of  
decision**

Of the children reported to have had their decision reversed during quarter 1 2016-17, 32% were due to the court not making a placement order, the same as in 2015-16.

## Regional adoptive family timeliness

The average number of days between registration and approval in the first quarter of 2016-17 was 257 days, this compares to 252 days in 2015-16. The average number of days between approval and match in the first quarter of 2016-17 was 250 days, this compares to 207 days in 2015-16.

All approvals and matches in Q1 2016-17			
	Average number of days between registration and approval for <u>new approvals</u>	Average number of days between approval and match for <u>new matches</u>	Average number of days between registration and match for <u>new matches</u>
North East	223	230	472
North West	228	199	437
Y & the Humber	249	230	505
East Midlands	215	226	395
West Midlands	240	212	434
East of England	232	245	470
London	342	342	625
South East	299	276	579
South West	265	217	484
LAs in ENGLAND	253	243	494
VAAs in ENGLAND	279	284	516
ENGLAND	257	250	497

2 Stage Process in Q1 2016-17			
Average number of days between enquiry and the start of Stage 1 for <u>new approvals</u>	Average number of days for Stage 1 for <u>new approvals</u>	Average number of days between the end of Stage 1 and the start of Stage 2 for <u>new approvals</u>	Average number of days for Stage 2 for <u>new approvals</u>
68	89	20	116
101	71	26	126
79	101	34	143
111	68	14	138
206	74	21	133
77	67	66	107
129	133	68	147
74	124	45	145
124	99	30	148
111	89	35	133
122	128	27	144
113	96	33	135

## Data Sources

**New data** This document has been updated with new data from the ALB quarterly survey providing information on children and adopters in the first quarter of 2016-17 (April to June 2016).

**SSDA903 data** Local authorities provide data on their looked after children using the SSDA903 collection. Data are collected from all local authorities. The information is collected at child level and includes information about the child's characteristics and their dates for each stage of the care process, including adoption. The data goes through thorough quality assurance and local authorities are able to update their historic data annually. We therefore view this as the most robust source of information on adoption. It is used to produce the [Looked After Children statistical first release](#) (SFR) and the [Adoption Scorecards](#). The most recent data covers the year ending 31 March 2016.

**ALB quarterly survey** In quarter 1 2016-17 the response rate for the child level section of the return was 91%, and the response rate for the adopter level section of the return from local authorities was 90%. Therefore national and regional figures on adoptions and adopters include estimates made for non-responses. Estimates are made by scaling to the regional level based on the number of adoptions in each LA during 2014-15 (from the SSDA903 data). The response rate for the adopter level section from Voluntary Adoption Agencies was 75%.

**Ofsted data** Ofsted have previously published annual data on the recruitment of adopters and the children placed with them. From quarter 4 2014-15 the Ofsted data collection became part of the quarterly survey.



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